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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 9676
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4451
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 1057
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 6755
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SUBJECT: INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION REACTS TO PAKISTAN'S MUMBAI INVESTIGATION

REF: ISLAMABAD 313

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The GOI reaction to the GOP report on its investigations into the Mumbai attacks and the request for further information from the GOI has been positive and "deflated tensions," according to the Indian High Commission. Surprise at the depth of the investigation into the attack, however, has not overcome Indian suspicions of ISI involvement in the attacks. Ambassador confirmed that President Zardari now supports sending Pakistani police investigators to New Delhi. End summary.

GOI Reaction to the Report

¶2. (C) Indian High Commission Political Counselor P. Kamaran told DepPolCouns February 16 the GOI intends to answer "the non-rhetorical questions" among those passed to the Indian High Commissioner by Foreign Secretary Bashir. The GOI, he said, was surprised by the extent of the criminal investigatory work done by the GOP, as reflected in the report information conveyed to the GOI and the list of questions passed to the High Commission. Kamaran attributed the hostile public tone taken by some Indian officials after the report was released as necessary for domestic (Indian) consumption.

¶3. (C) The successful investigation and prosecution of those implicated in the attack remains paramount for the GOI, said Kamaran, and the release of the report has "deflated tensions" between the GOP and GOI over Mumbai. Despite the GOI's positive reaction to the release of the report and the request for further information, India remains convinced the ISI directed the attacks and that at least a portion of Pakistan's military is actively engaged in derailing any efforts by the civilian government and President Zardari to improve relations with India. Pakistan's Army was founded with the purpose of defending the nation from India, said Kamaran. Until Pakistan moves from a "strategy of defense" to a "strategy of trade," relations with India will remain hostile. The person who, "understands this intuitively and believes it," is Zardari, added Kamaran. This has put the GOI in an awkward position, as expressing approval of the President or other "pro-Indian" Pakistani officials would further expose them to Army elements hostile to any rapprochement.

14. (C) Notwithstanding Zardari's own views on how to improve relations with India, the Indian High Commission and the GOI remain skeptical about the GOP's will to prosecute individuals involved in the Mumbai attacks. On this front, USG pressure has been important; Kamaran underscored that the U.S. Embassy gains greater information from the GOP than does the High Commission.

15. (C) The Joint Task Force on terrorism between the GOP and the GOI has not produced concrete results over the course of the last year, said Kamaran. This included a GOP failure to respond to requests made after the Kabul bombing of India's Embassy. Nonetheless, Kamaran supports the continuation of the Joint Task Force mechanism, believing that Pakistan and India fundamentally share the common objective of stemming terrorism. "Lack of answers," from Pakistan through the Joint Task Force had stymied the GOI and deepened Indian belief in GOP obduracy, he added. Concrete progress on the Mumbai attacks, including through effective prosecution of guilty individuals, would mean a break from that pattern.

Police Cooperation

16. (C) Regarding prospects for sending Pakistani police investigators to New Delhi, Ambassador called President Zardari and he agreed to support this action despite early qualms expressed by Interior Minister Rehman Malik.

PATTERSON